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Deal starts hole-y war

Critics fire at Ron blank points

By HARRISON RAINIE

News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — President Reagan was blasted from all sides yesterday for his Iran arms deal. Key lawmakers said his defense of the pact was riddled with errors and pressed a total overhaul of the President's foreign policy apparatus.

Senate Democrats said they planned a "complete and thorough" investigation of the National Security Council and its control over covert operations.

In addition, lawmakers from both parties predicted Reagan's flexibility to conduct secret operations would be sharply limited by new legal requirements that he report secret operations to congressional intelligence oversight committees within hours of when they are launched.

Incoming House Speaker

Jim Wright (D-Tex.) claimed Reagan broke existing law, which requires notification of Congress in "timely fashion" of covert activities, because the President kept the Iran negotiations quiet for 18 months.

Cold, hard, stark facts

Even Reagan's allies were dismayed. After a meeting with the President, House Republican Leader Robert Michel (Ill.) complained: "All we're left with is the cold, hard, stark facts of an exchange of weapons (for hostages)."

"The process has simply broken down," declared Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), the Senate's leading defense expert. "The President either was not fully aware, fully informed or capable of assimilating the information his staff was giving him."

Nunn called for the President to convene a panel of

"wise men and women" who can straighten out the foreign policy machinery. He and other lawmakers complained that too much power was concentrated in the National Security Council rather than the State Department or CIA.

Nunn gave a rundown of "errors and contradictions" in Reagan's policy and his defense of it in a press conference Wednesday night:

• Reagan claimed the anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons sent to Iran were "defensive." But Nunn claimed that all weapons sent to Iran could be considered "offensive" because "Iran's goal is to take over Iraq."

• Nunn scoffed at Reagan's claim the arms shipment was "midgetsize." He noted that the 1,000 TOW missile anti-tank weapons sent to Iran were "enough to equip three full light divisions."

• Nunn said the military equipment helped tip the "psychological balance" of the war in Iran's favor and gave a "green light" to other countries and arms merchants to equip Iran.

• Nunn claimed intelligence briefings have con-

firmed that there was a direct trade of U.S. arms for American hostages held by Iranian-backed militants in Lebanon, despite the President's contention there was no direct deal.

• Nunn also charged that though Iran might have moderated its support for terrorism, it "still supports terrorism and people who commit terrorist acts."